REMARKS

By the above actions, claim 8 has been amended. On the basis thereof and on the basis of the following remarks, further consideration of this application is requested.

All claims stand rejected as unpatentable over the Tajima et al. patent when viewed in combination with the Beckmann et al. patent application publication. However, to the extent that this rejection relates to the claims as now presented, it should be withdrawn for the following reasons.

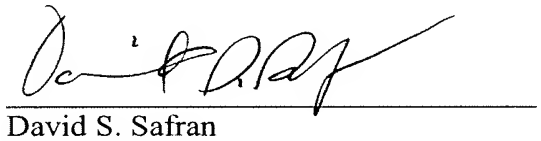
In making this rejection, the Examiner has argued that Tajima, e.g., in Fig. 6 shows islands which can serve as guides and which can be considered to be oxidizer guides together with the channel walls. Firstly, it is pointed out that Fig. 6 of Tajima shows a section of a fuel gas manifold (see, e.g., column 3, line 64 to column 4, line 2), but not a guiding arrangement for an oxidizer. Also, amended claim 8 does not merely require an oxidizer guide, but rather it specifies the nature of the oxidizer guide as running in the direction of the lengthwise channels (routing the fuel gas) and that they are open to sides of the fuel cell stacks for supplying the oxidizer. Thus, a wall or a closed island cannot properly be considered to be an oxidizer guide according to amended claim 8, regardless of its direction.

Furthermore, in Fig. 6 of Tajima, it can be seen that the reactant air (the oxidizer) flows perpendicular to the flow direction of the fuel gas. Even if the Examiner assumes that the regions of Tajima through which the fuel gas flows before and after it passes through the parallel manifolds 42 and 43 in Fig. 6 (the instance of the lower reference number "43" close to the words "reactant air in" appears to be erroneous) are considered as being parallel lengthwise channels, they do not run parallel to the oxidizer flow, but instead are oblique to the reactant airflow direction. Furthermore, manifolds 42, 43 are not lengthwise parallel channels, but are distributing and collecting zones. However, should these regions be seen as lengthwise channels, they could not at the same time be seen as distributing and collecting zones. Therefore, Tajima either does not show an oxidizer guide which runs in the direction of the lengthwise channels and which is open to sides of the fuel cell stack for supplying of the oxidizer, or does not have distributor and collecting zones, since the same components cannot meet two separate elements of the claims.

It is also pointed out that the Examiner has not responded to the argument set forth in applicant's response to the preceding Office Action filed April 17, 2010, with respect to the fact that Tajima and Beckmann provide incompatible teachings, which arguments are hereby incorporated by reference and with respect to which the Examiner is request to respond if the outstanding rejection is not to be withdrawn.

The Examiner's attention is also directed to the fact that it is desired to conduct a personal interview with the Examiner and her Primary Examiner after they have had an opportunity to review this response, and the undersigned expects to contact the Examiner for this purpose in early July.

Respectfully submitted,



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